

February 1994

Carolina DX Association

The Pileup

Newsletter of the CDXA

WD4R Joe Simpkins	President
AA4SC Rick Porter	Vice-President
W4UNP Bill Jennings	Secretary-Treasurer
WZ3Q Don Dano	Editor
AG4L Bruce Gregg	Net Manager

The President's Column

Welcome to the February issue of The Pileup. We are going to a monthly cycle of publication. Let me know how you like that idea. We are also going to solicit ads from vendors; members can, as always, run "equipment for sale" ads free of charge. Again, let me (or WZ3Q) know your reactions.

Hopefully, by the time you read this, you will all be in the 3YØPI log. I'm listening to the operation on 40 SSB as I type this and the operator has just said it's 77 degrees and no wind. Only a few days ago, the expedition had to shut down because of 80 MPH wind and five feet of snow. No wonder 3Y isn't on the typical tourist tour route!

Hopefully, everyone's antennas survived our recent ice storm. Nothing broke at my QTH, but I did have some ice dam induced leaking in the shack which almost got my 2-meter rig. I hate drying out carpet!

Thanks continue to be deserved by Bill Taylor, KD4IL, who is quietly but effectively working on our 147.18 interference problem.

Another reminder--1994 dues are due. PacketCluster users pay \$30.00 and non-Packet users pay \$15.00 yearly. Check your mailing label. If it is high-lighted in yellow, you have not yet sent in your 1994 dues. The March Pileup will be the last issue you receive without payment. Send dues to W4UNP--Bill Jennings, 630 Whitepine Drive, Catawba SC 29704.

Do try and join us at our informal luncheons at Shoney's. The restaurant is right across the street from Independence Mall, next to Wendy's. We meet each Wednesday at noon, in the back room. It's a great way to catch up with members, enjoy some good food and ham radio conversation.

At our last formal meeting, Murph, W4WMQ presented the video from the E35X operation. Everyone enjoyed it. The first CDXA "DX King" awards were also handed out. N4ZC took first prize, with 2074 band countries worked during 1993. AA4R and KØSD took second and third place trophies, respectively. Congratulations to these fine operators! As you know, this is an annual affair--the 1994 "DX King" race is underway. Who will win this year?

Mark your calendars now for the next CDXA formal meeting, to be held during the Charlotte hamfest next month. Rick, AA4SC has already reserved the nicer room at Valentino's for our gathering on March 12th. Full details in the March Pileup.

See you there and at one of the Wednesday luncheons.

73 de Joe WD4R

Carolina DX Association PacketCluster

KD4IL 145.09
N4ZC 144.93

CDXA Net on Boone repeater--147.36 • Wednesday 8:30 local AG4L NCS

NOTES

Thanks for the nice words regarding this publication. Many of you have replied via various avenues, indicating you're enjoying the newsletter. One note: the logo is back, after some software work here. I also want to firm up publication timing. The Pileup will be out by the 15th of each month. So, news and notes, articles and other info you'd like to have included in your newsletter should reach me by the 10th of each month to ensure publication.

In addition to the Editorial, some random notes, and what better focus for February than operating in the ARRL International DX Test, coming up the third full weekend of the month? (CW on February 19-20; phone on March 5-6) This contest has its roots in radio's earliest days, in what were called The Transatlantic Tests. European hams were to listen for transmissions from the US. Two-way contacts didn't happen, but signals did get through. Finally, in 1923, QSOs took place. These tests evolved into what we think of as the International DX contest today. As a DXer, why should you participate? Well, for one thing, they can be a lot of fun. For another, contests can be a very productive way to work a lot of countries almost all at once. For those of you who are new to the game (of either DX or contests), here are some tips.

- Don't plan on winning anything the first time out. Plan on having fun. On learning things.
- What will you learn? Propagation--when the bands open to where and for how long, the full capability of your station, including the ergonomics of your operating desk or position. If you or some body part is sore after a couple of hours of operating, something needs to be changed.
- Improve your operating skills. You answer those loud Europeans calling CQ--they want you to! Get in there and work them. You'll make them happy, but you'll also learn how to deal with QRM, band conditions, pileups (sometimes) and you'll learn how DX sounds. And sure enough, as you tune around looking for someone to work, you'll stumble across that TL8 or STØ you still need--seemingly all alone for a precious few seconds with you.
- Take notes. So you can compare your perceptions about the strength of signals with your friends or the PacketCluster spots. Or use these notes to ask questions of other contest ops later on. Lessons learned this way will be remembered long after the contest, so when you need the information again, it comes to mind quickly.
- Learn how to use your gear. If you can't crack that pileup instantly (you probably won't), don't despair. Set that frequency in memory or on the notepad and come back from time-to-time. You'll get through eventually. Learn to listen for weaker signals. Not only is this the closest you'll come to the reality and spirit of those Transatlantic Tests, but the rare DX is often weak--almost by definition, but not always. Propagation plays a major part; even HG73DX is weak at the start of the European opening.
- Memorize the exchange or set it in memory. And then only send it one time. Send your full call sign. Use the standard phonetics on voice contacts.
- Finally, and this is important, send in your log. Contest sponsors want to know their efforts are not in vain, and you'll want to compare your score with a friend across town or the "big gun" contest types with stations you only dream about. Looking over the results is another important part of learning, about DXing, about sport, about what works and doesn't work, about why we do what we do. These are the "results" of the "test" part of contesting.
- Good luck!

EDITORIAL

Operating--using radio gear we so lovingly look at in ads and describe in detail on the air--remains the one area of our hobby which doesn't get much exposure. It's hard to review. You won't see it advertised in any of the glossy catalogs or "for sale" in the fine print of *QST* classifieds. You won't hear it mentioned much on the air--we'd much rather talk about the gear itself, or any of a million other topics. Yet, operating, and the skills (or lack thereof) unique to it, are what separate us from radio's riff-raff (another favorite topic--the great unwashed between 27 Mhz and the extreme low end of 10-meters). Indeed, such skills separate us each from the other, according to our abilities, which may be the first time Marx has ever been paraphrased in *The Pileup*, let alone a ham radio editorial.

Operating is a skill, however, and can be learned. Just as you can figure out the mysteries of circuits or antennas or FCC rules, you can figure out how to operate. What's this mean, exactly?

My favorite line about operating has long been: *Good operators get that way by operating.* It's just that simple. Reading about it won't work. It helps, but that's all. Finding a good role model helps, but you have to know what good operating means in order to find someone to emulate. So...here's the editorial--a good operator can analyze any situation he or she encounters with grace and efficiency. No matter the mode, the band, gear or propagation, a good operator figures out what's going on quickly, and reacts accordingly. It doesn't matter if it's a pileup, a contest, or a shouting match on .313, a good operator knows what to do to accomplish his goal, whether it's getting through that pileup, improving his score, or turning the dial quietly down the band.

How do you know if you are a good operator? It's a tough question, because who likes to think they're not? But you really don't believe K1AR ran up all those great scores in the CQ WW just because he happened to live in New England, do you? Again, QTH helps, but that's all. John's a superb operator. And he got that way by contest operating.

It helped that he had some excellent teachers, those role models I spoke of earlier. John operated from some of the largest (and best) contest multi-multi stations as a young ham, and his models were excellent ops who undoubtedly started him down the right road. It helped that John kept operating on his own, practicing what he learned.

When I first came to the Carolinas in the early 80s, I brought 20 years of traffic handling experience, high speed CW skills, and what I thought was some contest ability. I didn't own a microphone or a linear. Obviously, the first phone WW at N4ZC's brought home the point that I wasn't as good as I thought I was. Or as I wanted to be. I bought both a mic and amp. And I continued to operate from Roger's outside the CQ WW, in exchange for doing tower and antenna work. I learned a lot. Enough so that when I moved to PVRC country in 1988, I could more than hold my own from the big multi-multi station at W3LPL, where I was a 20-meter operator.

I was pleased (somewhat surprised) to find I was good enough to operate in this "big time" environment. I thoroughly enjoyed it. I knew enough to teach others some things. Like ALWAYS checking the short CA/SA path first when sitting down at the multiplier position or when the running rate drops. Like working up the band on 10, 15 and 20 so you're always tuning INTO your signals. (I was amazed to find ops tuning down these bands and up on 75-meters. It makes no sense and slows you down.) Like using the second or remote vfo as the xmit frequency control, so all the "bells and whistles" of the radio are available for receiving. How to operate with stacked antennas--it helps to know when to switch and why. And so on...all tips and techniques signifying experience--all part of being a good operator. Operating skills and techniques (along with Frank's engineering skills and station design, and the other good ops) enabled W3LPL to win major contests and me to score high or win some on my own as a single op. Such skills continue to come into play whenever I'm on the radio, whether FM, sideband or cw. I obviously got them by operating...and contesting remains the most intense and interesting way to develop your skills.

--WZ3Q

DX Advisory Committee News

K4MQG (our own local representative to the DXAC) has supplied the following chart--useful in determining where you fall on the DXCC ladder.

The following page describes the latest Committee activities.

AERL DXCC COUNTRY STATUS

* * LATEST TOP TWENTY * *

DXCC COUNTRY	CALL	DXCC CREDIT DATE Add - Del - Rein	DXCC TOTAL
Eritrea (3)	E3	(R) May 24, 1991	328
Abu Ail Is.	ET3/A,OE1/A,AI5	(D) Mar.31, 1991	327
Czech Republic	OK, OL	(A) Jan.01, 1993	328
Slovakia	OM	(A) Jan.01, 1993	327
Czechoslovakia	OK, OM	(D) Dec.31, 1992	326
Macedonia	4N5, Z31	(A) Sep.08, 1991	327
Bosnia-Herzegovina	T9,4N4,4O4,YU4	(A) Oct.15, 1991	326
Slovenia	S5, YU3	(A) Jun.26, 1991	325
Croatia	9A, YU2	(A) Jun.26, 1991	324
Penguin Is.	ZS0, ZS1	(A) Dec.31, 1990	323
Yemen	70	(A) May 22, 1990	322
Yemen Arab Rep. (N)	4W	(D) May 21, 1990	321
Yemen PDR. (S)	70	(D) May 22, 1990	322
German Dem Rep. (2)	DM, Y2-9	(D) Oct.02, 1990	323
Walvis Bay	ZS9	(A) Sep.01, 1977	324
Banaba Is. (Ocean Is)	T33	(A) May 01, 1990	323
Conway Reef	3D2	(A) May 01, 1990	322
Malyj Vysotskiy Is.	4J1	(A) May 01, 1989	321
Rotuma Is.	3D2	(A) May 01, 1989	320
Western Sahara (1)	S0	(R) Apr.01, 1988	319

NOTE: Honor Roll requires 319 countries from the current 328 DXCC total.
There are currently 55 deleted countries.

- (1) Formerly EA9, Rio DE Oro. Prior contacts now count for S0.
- (2) Only contacts made from Sep.17, 1973 to Oct.02,1990 count for GDR.
- (3) Deleted Nov.15, 1962 as ET. QSO's prior to this are now valid for E3.

DXAC Highlights

- **Pratas Island** DXAC ballot date has not been scheduled. The main discussion of Pratas Island status has centered on ownership of Pratas by Taiwan.
- **Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus** A petition for new DXCC country status of this Republic had been submitted by KR4M. It was later requested that this proposal be dropped from the agenda, but recent information indicates it will be returned to the agenda in the near future.
- **Scarborough Reef** DK9KX has submitted a petition to the DXAC for new country consideration for Scarborough Reef (Huangyan Dao) based on DXCC Criteria 2a. This reef is in the South China Sea and is claimed by China.
- **Aldabra Island** HB9MX/S79MX has submitted a petition to the DXAC to reinstate this deleted island country to the current DXCC list under Criteria 1.
- **Mt. Athos** This country is being considered for deletion from the DXCC country list. All documentation on the original petition for new DXCC country status has been submitted to the DXAC for review and comment.

Other issues under consideration include:

QSLing Guidelines

The QSLing Guidelines recommendation should be voted on in February or March by the DXAC and then sent to the ARRL Awards Committee for final approval and implementation.

Call Area Calling

The Call Area Calling recommendation (chaired by K4MQG) should be voted on by the DXAC in March. The vote will then be sent to the ARRL Awards Committee, probably in April, for final approval and implementation.

--K4MQG

Tech Tips

A couple of you have asked about Cramolin products—either in person or via PacketCluster—based on last month's Tips column. (Caig Laboratories 16744 West Bernardo Drive San Diego CA 92127) These products are indeed worth looking into—they do far more than the typical can of "contact cleaner" which we've all used. Write for the literature. Or check with suppliers in the region. These products really work.

DX News

From QRZ DX, we reprint a check list allowing you to keep track of DXCC status for QSOs with stations in Russia & former Soviet republics. Several new prefixes are active; several previously rare ones are now common.

Country	Old Prefix	New Prefix
Armenia	RG, UG	EK, 4J?
Azerbaijan	RD, UD	4K5-4K9 4J?
Belarus	RC, UC	EU, EV, EW
Georgia	RF, UF	4L
Kazakhstan	RL, UL	UN, UO, UP, UQ
Moldava	RO, UO	ER
Kyrgyzstan	RM, UM	EX
Russia	RA, UA, RV, UV, RW, UW, RZ, UZ, 4K, etcetera	R, UA-UI, 4KØ-4K4?
Tadjikistan	RJ, UJ	EY
Turkmenistan	RH, UH	EZ
Ukraine	RB, UB, RT, UT, RY, UY	UR-UZ, EM, EN, EO
Uzbekistan	RI, UI	UJ, UK, UL, UM

Charlotte Hamfest News

Saturday Forums March 12, 1994

<i>Time</i>	<i>Forum Room A</i>
9:00	Military Affiliated Radio Service Bill Sutpin WB8CBU
10:00	Transmission lines, antenna wire, etcetera Press Jones N8UG The Wireman, Inc.
11:00	Microsoft Windows, including Windows NT Bryan Ballard Microsoft Corporation
12:15	Shuttle Amateur Radio Experiment Captain Richard Richards KB5SIW NASA
1:30	Roanoke Division ARRL Forum John Kanode N4MM Director Dennis Bodson W4PWF Vice-Director
2:30	How to work DXCC on the Russian Satellite RS-12 Roger Burt N4ZC
3:45	National Traffic System Will Harper K4IWW Section Traffic Manager Carl Starnes W4EAT Assistant STM
9:00	<i>Sunday Forums March 13, 1994</i> Amateur Radio Emergency Services Billy Mitchell WB4SGA Sec. Emergency Coordinator Greg Sellers WB4HRR DEC
10:00	The Blizzard of 1993 Dale Eck Meteorologist The Weather Channel
11:15	VK9MM Mellish Reef DXpedition 1993 Murray Adams WA4DAN-VK9MM DXCC Questions & Answers Chuck Hutchinson K8CH Gary Dixon K4MQG & John Kanode N4MM

MEMBER PROFILE

Larry Sossoman K4CEB

Larry's 54, been licensed since '54, and he has been a postman for 27 years, half of 54, which must be a significant number in Larry's life. He lives in Concord, North Carolina.

When I asked him about his most interesting ham radio experience, I guessed Larry would tell me something about DXing, having worked them all 10 years ago. Or maybe some interesting postal story about QSL card deliveries. Instead, he told me of an experience with his first 2-meter radio... Seems Larry and his wife were traveling through one of the South's larger cities, where they had been warned about 5 o'clock traffic tieups, with certain streets changing to one-way only for the rush hour, and so on. Larry asked for suggestions on his radio, and a pleasant y1 operator guided them through the city without mishap. She identified each street, store or landmark in acute detail. As they left the city, Larry thanked her for her assistance and said something like they'd see each other again. The y1 op countered by saying that would be nice, but she was visually handicapped--blind since birth. She had learned the city from rides with friends and family, remembering all the details told to her. This may have been one of the few times when Larry was speechless. He remains impressed to this day by this QSO.

One DX tale surfaced concerning his early efforts to work EA6--which was harder in the 50s than it is today. English was not yet a universal language, and there were fewer hams. But an EA6 did start to show on 20-meter AM, exclusively in Spanish. For several nights running, an enterprising W2 (who was fluent in Spanish) would move up 10 and conduct impromptu classes in how to say your name, QTH, report, and so on. Since the pileup calling the EA6 was usually less than 10 stations, this technique helped lots of the deserving work a new one. Larry ended the tale by saying, "My, how times have changed."

Larry's station today is modest, running a TS-830S, SB-221, with a delta loop for 80; dipole for 40; a 4-el monobander for 20 at 100 ft; a 4-el monobander for 15 at 110 ft; and 5-el for 10 at 80 ft. Larry has the usual assortment of 2-meter gear for FM and packet.

Like many of us, Larry finds hamming to be a relaxing pastime (yet he's worked them all, earning 5B-DXCC and 5B-WAZ in the process). He likes to operate CW, which he finds useful for losing the cares and concerns of the world. A sentiment shared by many of us. Watch for Larry on the bands, or if you're passing through Concord, give a listen to 146.655, his repeater.

Member profiles continue to generate interest and intense reaction from CDXA members, both in person and over-the-air. They're fun to write, too. I hope to continue generating member-supplied articles as much as possible--making the "editing" part of this job fun.

I'd like everyone to tell me why you chase DX--what is it about this aspect of our hobby that interests you? And, if you can, try to define DX for me. Nothing long or verbose. Just your immediate thoughts or reactions. I'd also like to run the results of a DXCC survey or poll in this newsletter. What do you need? If you have them all, what was the last (or hardest, perhaps) one to work. Send in your answers! With just a little input, we can have a more interesting Pileup.

Send via PacketCluster (N4ZC home node) or the US mail or telephone 704-567-8074. Thanks.

MEMBER PROFILE

Bill Parris AA4R

Bill is 55, was first licensed in 1955 as KN4GHR, then as K4GHR, and became AA4R in 1978. After Georgia Tech (Industrial Engineering degree), then two years in the Army, Bill ended up with Hoechst Celanese, where's he's worked for 28 years. His current responsibilities are in Strategic Planning, International Trade and Tariff, and Business Information.

You may have heard Bill's wife, Joey, on the CDXA repeater. She's N4NPT. Their oldest daughter Theresa is N4AFY, middle daughter Cheryl is WB4BYE (both live in Raleigh), and Bill's son says he is WAYNE. *Shouldn't there be a number in there somewhere...?*

Bill's "most interesting ham radio experiences" got out of hand. Bill said he would include: traffic handling for Army MARS during the Vietnam era; helping license over 200 Novices as an instructor in Charlotte from 1977-81; helping organize the first Metrolina Hamfest; being a founder of the North Carolina FM Repeater Association, and editing *The Repeater Journal*; serving as ARRL SCM 1977-80; several terms as President of Mecklenburg ARS; getting the W-4 QSL Bureau moved to Charlotte, and serving as the first Bureau Manager.

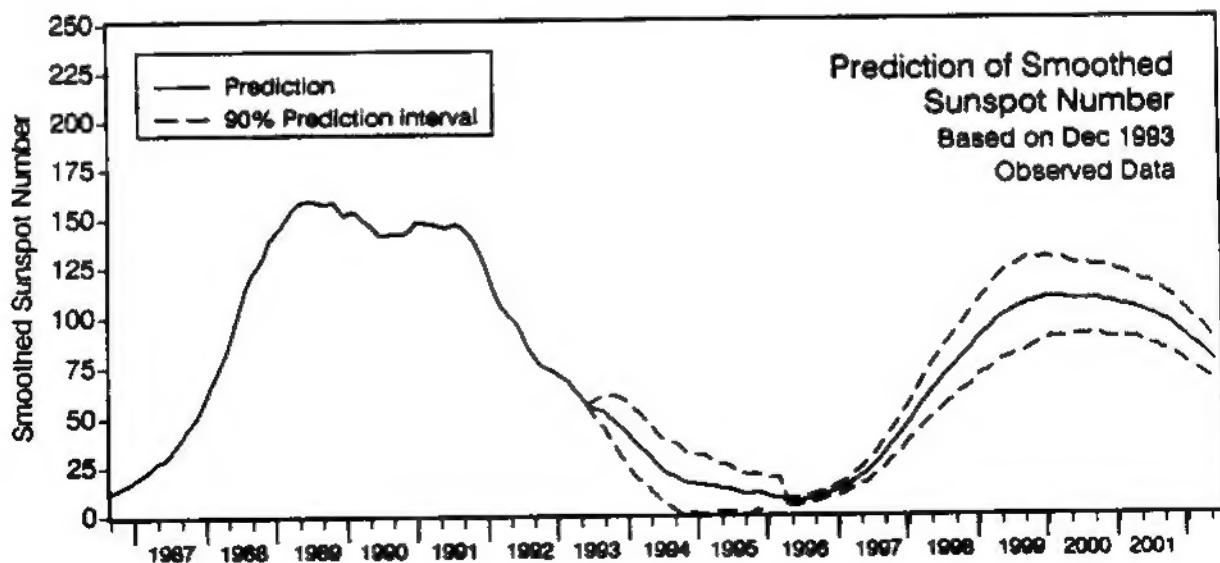
He got introduced to DXing back in 1970 by K4CDZ (now W4HG), putting up a beam and starting to collect awards. Bill's especially proud of his 5B WAS #8--which he earned using only a TA-33jr and an old Swan 500 (*remember those?*). Since then, he's managed to work all the current countries, which he credits to the CDXA network, PacketCluster, and INDEXA.

Bill's current station consists of a TenTec Omni VI driving an Amp Supply LK-800A amplifier. He uses a TA-33 on a 50 ft tower, a 4-el 20-meter monobander and a 40-meter rotary dipole on a 60 ft tower. He also has a dipole for 30-meters, a delta loop for 80-meters and a Hy-Tower for 160-meters. All this hardware is located up on Lake Norman, in an idyllic setting.

Bill's enthusiasm for the hobby is strong, as evidenced by his solid second place finish in our recent club contest. He continues to find new things to enjoy and challenge him in our hobby. He hopes to be active for another 38 years.

Henry Elwell, N4UH forwarded this Model Prediction of Smooth Sunspot Numbers from NOAA

SESC Regression Model Prediction of Smoothed Sunspot Number



The Back Page

Meeting Notice

WHO? CDXA, interested DXers, & guests
WHAT? MEETING
WHEN? March 12, 1994 during the Charlotte Hamfest—full details in March Pileup
WHERE? Valentino's
WHY? CAMARADERIE, FOOD & DRINK

Pileup Classified

FOR SALE

Icom 761 \$1200.00

Icom 275H (100 watt multi-mode 2-meter rig) \$650.00

Tower, rotator, beam, vhf vertical \$550.00 (you take down & move)

Sorry, no more details included.

Contact Ervin Jackson, N4BIG in Charlotte @ 704-375-6565 or office 334-1123

Drake C-line • R-4C & T-4XC w/power supply • (unmodified late serial #'s 27K & 25K)
\$300.00 for the pair
Contact WZ3Q

Charlotte Hamfest Preview

KI4YV, Forums Co-Chair informs us that K8CH will check QSL cards at the Hamfest for DXCC credit. Check the program for the location of the ARRL booth. The following rules will apply:

- 1) A maximum of 110 QSLs can be checked
- 2) A \$2.00 fee will be charged to cover postage and printing

Two major forums—the VK9MM expedition and the Shuttle—will provide unique glimpses into DXing.

VK9MM, which was only the sixth trip to Mellish Reef, was a successful expedition, running up 44,500 QSOs on 160-6 meters in nine days of operation in September of 1993.

Captain Richard Richards will present first-hand information about piloting the Space Shuttle. Dick, KB5SIW, has been an astronaut since 1981. He has flown three times—in STS-28, in STS-41, and in STS-50—logging 22 days, 22 hours, 41 minutes and 15 seconds in space. STS-50 remains the longest Space Shuttle flight in history.

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FIRST CLASS MAIL



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